

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR US GR TU

SUBJECT: REACTION TO THE MISSILE "CHARGE" -- A PROPOSAL

1. THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR EFFORTS IN GREECE OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS HAS BEEN OUR ATTEMPT TO REBUILD GREEK CONFIDENCE IN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP AND AMERICAN PURPOSES.

2. LAST WEEK DURING THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON THE TURKISH DCA, SENATOR PELL ASKED WHETHER IT WAS TRUE THAT THE TURKS HAVE MOVED US-SUPPLIED PERSHING MISSILES TO POSITIONS NEAR THE GREEK ISLANDS. DESPITE REPORTS ON DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ELLSWORTH'S RESPONSE THE GREEK REACTION TO THIS QUERY HAS BEEN INCREDIBLY CORROSIVE OF OUR ATTEMPTS TO RESTORE GREEK CONFIDENCE IN THE US AND OUR ALLIANCE. MOREOVER, THE LOCAL REACTION TO SENATOR PELL'S INQUIRY IS ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE HALF-TRUTHS, UNTRUTHS AND DISTORTION WITH WHICH OPPONENTS OF THE US-GREEK ALLIANCE WISH TO BURDEN OUR RELATIONSHIP IN THEIR ONGOING ATTEMPT TO RUPTURE IT.

3. FOR ALL THESE REASONS, WE ARE CONVINCED THAT WE MUST MAKE AN UNUSUAL EFFORT -- AND QUICKLY -- TO COUNTER

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THIS STORY BEFORE IT BECOMES EVEN MORE FIRMLY ROOTED

IN THE GREEK CONSCIOUSNESS. REGRETTABLY, STATEMENTS BY THE EMBASSY, PUBLIC OR PRIVATE, ARE NOT ENOUGH. NOR WILL ON TH RECORD STATEMENTS BY THE DEPT AND THE DEPT OF DEFENSE SUFFICE, THOUGH THEY ARE BADLY NEEDED AND WOULD BE USEFUL.

4. THE PROBLEM AROSE WITH SENATOR PELL'S INQUIRY ABOUT THE MISSILES, AN INQUIRY WHICH IN GREECE WAS QUICKLY TRANSFORMED INTO AN ASSERTION AND ACCEPTED AS FACT. SENATOR PELL, OR AT A MINIMUM HIS OFFICE, IS GOING TO HAVE TO BE BROUGHT BACK INTO THE ACT, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, TO COUNTER THESE CHARGES.

5. WE WOULD STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT THE FACTS CONCERNING MISSILES IN TURKEY BE BROUGHT QUICKLY TO THE ATTENTION OF THE SENATOR'S OFFICE WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE REACTION IN GREECE TO THE REPORTS ABOUT HIS QUESTION OF LAST WEDNESDAY. WE WOULD URGE THAT THE DEPT THEN SUGGEST TO THE SENATOR, OR HIS SENIOR STAFF, IN VIEW OF THE IMPACT HIS QUESTION HAS HAD IN GREECE, THAT HE CONSIDER ISSUING A BRIEF STATEMENT. WHAT WE HAVE IN MIND IS SOMETHING ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES: "SENATOR PELL HAS REVIEWED ALL EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION REGARDING THE ALLEGED MOVEMENT OF MISSILES BY TURKISH AUTHORITIES FROM POSITIONS NEAR THE TURKISH-SOVIET BORDER TO POSITIONS ON THE AEGEAN COAST NEAR THE GREEK ISLANDS. HE IS SATISFIED THAT (1) THERE ARE NO PERSHING MISSILES IN TURKEY AND (2) THAT THE REPORT THAT MISSILES OF ANY TYPE HAVE BEEN MOVED TO POSITIONS NEAR THE GREEK ISLANDS IS FALSE."

6. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE THAT ANY STATEMENT WHICH MAY EVENTUALLY BE ISSUED MUST BE TAILORED TO FIT THE STRENGTH OF EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION IN WASHINGTON, THE CLOSER THAT IT COMES TO A CATEGORICAL AND BROAD DENIAL THE BETTER.
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